

is February 27, 2004, this application claims priority from a previously filed Japanese Patent Application. Specifically, the present application claims priority from Japanese Patent Application No. 2003-054688 ("the Japanese Patent Application"), which was filed with the Japanese patent Office on February 28, 2003. Accordingly, the effective filing date of the present application predates the filing date of Mahle. As such, Mahle does not qualify as a proper reference for a rejection based on 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Applicants have included a certified English language translation of the Japanese Patent Application. Applicants note that minor supplemental items were added to the U.S. application to comply with the U.S. patent application requirements (e.g., experimental data, pictures, and drawings). However, all of the basic concepts of the invention of the Japanese Patent Application are incorporated in the present application.

Accordingly, please submit the attached certified translation of the Japanese Patent Application to claim priority over Mahle. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that claims 1-16 be allowed.

Application No.: 10/787,207
Filing Date: February 27, 2004
Attorney Docket Number: 04329.3253-00

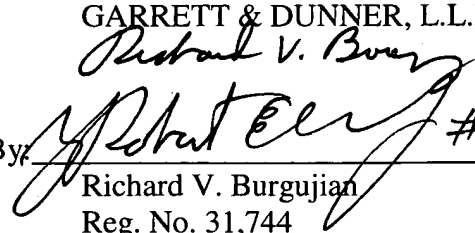
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Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: April 10, 2006

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